

Message Text

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PAGE 01 USBERL 00447 081129Z

44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

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FM USMISSION USBERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0601

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL MUNICH

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

CINCEUR

CINCUSAFE

CINCUSAREUR

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GENEVA FOR CSCE DELEGATION

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

CINCUSAFE FOR POLAD

CINCUSAREUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PDIF; UR, GE, WB, G2

SUBJECT: APPOINTMENT OF ABRASIMOV AS SOVIET

AMBASSADOR TO GDR

1. WEST BERLIN PRESS MARCH 7 CARRIED TASS REPORT,
CONFIRMING RUMORS WE HAD PICKED UP PREVIOUS WEEK,
THAT ABRASIMOV WOULD BE RETURNING TO EAST BERLIN TO
REPLACE YEFREMOV AS SOVIET AMBASSADOR. TAGESSPIEGEL
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PAGE 02 USBERL 00447 081129Z

SPECULATED IN EDITORIAL THAT SOVIETS MIGHT HAVE SENT

ABRASIMOV BACK TO EAST BERLIN IN ORDER TO PROVIDE CONVERSATION PARTNER WHO WOULD LEAD DISCUSSIONS WITH ALLIED AMBASSADORS INTO ALL-GERMAN AFFAIRS, OR BECAUSE SOVIETS WERE DISSATISFIED WITH RESULTS OF QA. IN EITHER CASE, TAGESSPIEGEL CONCLUDED, SOVIET BERLIN POLICY WILL REQUIRE SPECIAL OBSERVATION.

2. MISSION OFFICERS, BY WHAT MAY BE MORE THAN COINCIDENCE, RECEIVED INVITATIONS MARCH 7 TO FAREWELL PARTY FOR SOVIET EMB COUNSELOR RODIN, WHOSE DEPARTURE IS AS MUCH A SURPRISE AS THAT OF YEFREMOV. WE ALSO HAVE HEARD RUMOR THAT SOVIET DCM GORINOVICH IS LEAVING.

3. WE ARE SOMEWHAT CONCERNED THAT ARRIVAL OF ABRASIMOV AND ATTENDANT SHAKE-UP IN EMB MAY HERALD TOUGHER SOVIET STANCE ON BERLIN FOR WHICH PURPOSE IT WOULD SEEM NATURAL TO SEND A SEASONED VETERAN BACK TO EAST BERLIN. (AFTER SPD SETBACK IN MARCH 3 BERLIN ELECTIONS WE HAD SPECULATED THAT SOVIET EMB MIGHT TO CONTRARY, AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING, EMPHASIZE CARROT OVER STICK.) WE RECOGNIZE, HOWEVER, THAT YEFREMOV'S ASSIGNMENT TO VIENNA (VIENNA 1844) DOES NOT SEEM TO BE WORTHY POSITION FOR CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER SO THAT IT IS POSSIBLE YEFREMOV FELL INTO BAD GRACE IN MOSCOW AND NEEDED TO BE REPLACED QUICKLY. AT ANY RATE, ALTHOUGH WEST BERLINERS HAVE RESPECT FOR ABRASIMOV'S ABILITY, THEY WILL NOT BE REASSURED BY HIS ABRUPT RETURN TO THE CITY. RODIN, IN TURN, HAS FREQUENTLY PICTURED HIMSELF TO ALLIES IN WEST BERLIN AS REPRESENTATIVE OF MOSCOW'S DESIRE TO MAINTAIN CORDIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH ALLIES AND TO AVOID TENSIONS IN BERLIN IN CONTRAST TO HIS PREDECESSOR. BELETSKIY, WHOSE PURPOSE

SEEMED TO BE TO MAKE ENEMIES EVERYWHERE.

4. SENAT CHANCELLERY CHIEF HERZ TOLD ALLIED LIAISON OFFICERS MARCH 7 THAT TAGESSPIEGEL ANALYSIS APPEARED CORRECT. SOVIETS PROBABLY TRYING REASSERT GREATER DEGREE CONTROL OVER GDR AS WELL AS EXPRESSING HIGHER PRIORITY FOR BERLIN MATTERS. HERZ ANTICIPATED THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 USBERL 00447 081129Z

COORDINATION BETWEEN SOVIETS IN EAST BERLIN AND MOSCOW WOULD BE IMPROVED. HE ALSO NOTED IN PASSING THAT "FRIENDS IN GDR" TOLD HIM EAST GERMANS OCCASIONALLY PUT THINGS OVER ON YEFREMOV-- SOMETHING ABRASIMOV WOULD NOT PERMIT. GEORGE

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